

Troop 209 Trek Leader Essentials

As trek leader, you are the primary leader of that trek and the one with which full responsibility and accountability rests. The buck stops with you on every level and aspect of the trek, regardless of what responsibilities and/or tasks you've assigned other adults or leaders

In order to lead a successful trek, organization is the key, from the time you agree to lead the trek, to the recap at the meeting following the trek, if you stay organized and on a timeline, all will be well and more importantly, the boys will have fun and learn something.

Trek Elements:

Element One – Information and Participants:

Trek Info/Sign-Up sheet + Permission slip (including cost-per-boy) should be prepared as soon as possible, preferably six weeks before the trek. The info/sign-up sheet should be brought to every meeting and put on the back table. All materials should have a drop dead due date on them for permission slip, money and medical form

*(cost per boy) To determine how much each boy should pay for a trek. Add the hard costs; i.e. campground fee, materials such as horse, water craft, skis, etc. (maybe divided by an estimated number of participants) Then add the cost of food for the trek - \$4 breakfast per boy, \$4 lunch and \$5 dinner. If you are gone two days and have two dinners, two breakfasts and one lunch – the food cost per boy is \$22 + % of camp cost + other fees = total cost per boy – **Remember, adults have to pay too. Same formula.***

With each boy that signs up – you should check if a current medical form exists in the red medical form book upstairs in the library. If one does not exist, the boy should be told immediately that he must provide one. Forms can be downloaded from the Website.

Keep a binder or Peechee-type folder for each trek. As the boys give you permission slips and checks, staple the check to the permission slip, mark on the slip if a medical form is on file or if it is needed (then mark it when it's turned in) and put the slip and attached check in the folder and give the medical form to Sandie Seaver and she will put it in the medical book. ***A medical book must accompany each driver on the trek.***

You will also need to secure a second trained leader to attend the trek and secure an Senior Patrol Leader.

Post all the information about a trek on our troop website (www.troop209.org) by sending the information and files to our webmaster (WebMaster@Troop209.org). It should include:

Name of trek
Location
Dates
Start and end times
The Permission Slip (saved as a pdf file)
Directions/map
Costs
Deadline for signing-up
Clothes/gear to bring
Uniform required
website of location (if appropriate)

Element Two – Preparations:

Create a program for the boys to follow. If it's a rock-climbing trek or horseback riding or some kind of trek at which there is a major event, half the work is done, but also have prepared, wake-up times, meal times, recreation time, scout skills time, book-checking time, structured free time, campfire and lights out. The best thing to do is put this on a spreadsheet and get it to the Website so the boys and prepare properly.

Contact the troop quartermaster and let him know what kind of trek you are leading and ask if there are any concerns about equipment you will need.

Hold class, or invite another adult or boy leader during regular troop meetings to hold class, on scout skills that may be needed for that trek.

Three weeks before the trek, secure patrol leaders and cooks and have the boys plan their menus. Make sure they know their budget (from the formula on page one) and remind them that if there is money left over, they can buy snacks for their patrol, but if they go over the budget, that is a donation.

Have patrols pull their patrol boxes, coolers and blue bins. This should be done through and with the assistance of the troop Quartermaster. They should double check supplies – give a list of missing or damaged items to the quartermaster and to YOU – and they should stay on top of the situation until it is remedied.

Call Tracey Hodges at St. Francis 504-4400, to secure the trailer for the date of your trek, if you need it. Before the day you pick up the trailer, go up to check the tires, break lights, etc.

Element Three – Communication:

Communication is the key to making sure everyone is prepared. Keep participants updated on possible weather conditions, changes and/or concerns.

With each meeting, make sure everyone knows the deadline. Also send me or JR and email to blast concerning the deadline.

Check each participants permission slip for any possible medications that should administered during the trek. Make sure you get it right...talk to the parent, don't just leave it to the boy to explain it.

Element Four – Tour Permit:

Two weeks before the trek, download the tour permit from the Website, fill it out, have your assistant leader fill out his part and take it to the Council office to be stamped approved. The form must be filled out properly and completely and all the necessary training noted. You and your trek assistant must have updated child protection training. It can be done on-line easily.

Element Five – Boys Prep:

One week before the trek – give cook the coolers and blue bins to shop for and pack food. This should be done through and with the assistance of the troop Quartermaster.

Element Six – Departure:

Before the departure time, arrive at the Methodist church with the trailer and park it so it's easy load but not in anyone's way. **You should be in full uniform.** Also have directions for your drivers as well your cell phone number in case they get lost or separated.

Make sure the troop Quartermaster or his appointed representative is there before anyone pulls anything out of the basement. Each item must be catalogued as to not just what was taken, but when appropriate, to whom it was assigned – from staves and rope to tents and lanterns, it all needs to be catalogued. Make sure you take the first aid kit.

Make sure each of your drivers has a medical book, that they are gassed up and ready to roll and that the boys have their 10 essentials with them in the car in which they are traveling as well as being in full class-A uniform.

You'll most likely be cleaning up some last minute paperwork. You should also have with all your paperwork, the stamped portion of the Tour Permit.

Try and caravan to the trek site and leave as close to on time as you can.

Element Seven – Camp:

It is important that everyone works on troop gear and issues before pitching their tents and stowing their personal gear. Your SPL and PLs should be able to handle this. If it's not being done, go to the SPL and ask him to talk with his PLs and get everyone squared away. There should be no yelling unless there is immediate danger.

The campsite should have a plan and set up in patrol-style. The first aid kit should be easily accessible. All gear should be stowed so no animals or other elements can get to it and spoil or destroy it.

Get the program started and remind the boys that if the work gets done, there will be time for free time.

Have Fun.

Element Eight – Return:

Everyone should be in full class-A uniform. If the return time is “up in the air” you will have to have the boys call their parents a half hour before you are expected to arrive back. Upon return to the Methodist Church, keep in mind that depending on what time you return, there may be service going on so where and how you park the trailer will be an issue. The troop Quartermaster or his representative should meet you there with the sheet of signed out items taken on the trek.

The patrol cooks should take the cooler, patrol box and blue bin home to clean, check and list items that need repair and/or replaced. The PLs should assign the tents to be taken home, set up, dried out and cleaned. Also a list should be made as to any damage or repairs that need to be done on that tent. These lists must be given to the troop Quartermaster on the first Tuesday after the trek. All items must also be returned on that first Tuesday after the trek.

These items should be put back ready to use.

The medical books must be collected from your drivers and returned back to the library.

You must stay at the church until every Scout is picked up. Once every boy is safely in the hands of a parent, make sure everything is locked and secure and return the trailer to St. Francis.

Get a shower...have a drink

Element Nine – Equipment and Debrief

Before the next Tuesday night's meeting, go over your paperwork, organize the checks and receipts to hand them to Mitch Thomas

Also email a list of participants to Bob Olsen so the boys get credit for the trek.

At the next Tuesday night's meeting, the troop Quartermaster should meet you at the Methodist church with the sheet of signed out items and as the boys bring back the patrol boxes, coolers, bins and tents, you, the boy and the Quartermaster goes over the item making sure it's in proper order and/or all items needing replacing and/or repair is listed and in the hands of the Quartermaster.

You will have to stay on the boys who do not return any item in his charge.

Hand Mitch Thomas the checks and receipts. Recap the trek during announcements time and recognize outstanding scouts and successes.

Add to your binder of the trek a summary of lessons learned (pro and con). Keep the binder in a safe place for future trek leaders to refer to.

Work with the Troop Historian to document and post a record of the trek on our Troop website.

Thank you for your guidance, help and generous gift for your talents and time.